

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلُهُ عَلَى رُسُلِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

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## CANKERED CIVILIZATION

By AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

MODERN civilization, though still far from its appointed goal, continues to make steady progress. Certain of the elements in Nature have been brought under man's control; he may even claim to govern, though within certain limits, earth, water, fire, and air. Electricity has entered his service, and the day is at hand when the stars in their courses will do likewise, as is revealed in the Qur-án.<sup>1</sup> But this progress is imperilled; for the Western world is its present pioneer, and the Western world has become diseased and its civilization cankered—a state of things which is enervating the human body, and must ere long lead to physical decrepitude on a scale which may leave no strength or stamina for further progress. If a sound mind be the child of a sound body, the latter in its turn owes its very existence to moral sanity. Every seat of civilization in the Western world has turned or is turning into a nursery of evil—evil that will physically paralyse the human race within two or three generations; and thus all progress will be stopped. Consider, for example,

<sup>1</sup> "And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon, and the stars are made subservient to His commandments." (Qur-án, xvi. 12.)

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the effect of venereal contagion,<sup>1</sup> which is playing dreadful havoc with our manhood. There is already an appreciable decrease in the birth-rate in the West, and those born in the coming generation are likely to prove a race of rickety weaklings, doomed to early extinction.

Medical science is contemplating a method of injection as a cure for this trouble. It may succeed in its attempt, and score yet another victory for science over disease; but its efforts must needs prove an additional danger to health in the long run. It will act as a sort of physiological atonement, no less perilous to moral well-being than that spiritual atonement given to humanity through the medium of the Formal Church in the West.

The fear of punishment is an effective check to evil on this earth. We find this truth exemplified—fear of the law, of disease, and of the wrath to come. In each case it has noticeably stemmed the onrush of evil; but unfortunately, Western culture has removed the criminal stigma from a variety of evils that tend to destroy the fabric of society. The doctrine of Atonement removed the fear of a punishment to be meted out to a sinner in the hereafter. If the West has become more unrighteous than the East, it is because that doctrine has put a sort of premium on sin in Christian lands. Fear of

<sup>1</sup> On the subject of New York, Mr. Kidwā'i says: "In the very country of the Rev. Dr. Holmes the result of this non-repression of the sex instinct by any powerful or effective religion is that five million acts of prostitution are being committed every day and 98 per cent. of the prostitutes are venereally affected, although the secular law of the United States is very strict against prostitution in any form. It is said that 225,000 illegitimate children are born every year in New York alone; 2,500,000 cases of syphilis are treated annually, and a million and a half unborn babies are murdered every year in America.

"These are appalling statistics, but based on authentic sources. These are the results of the non-repression of the sex instinct.

"As recently as in June, 1929, Mr. Gover Whalen, the Police Commissioner of New York, made a statement that crime was steadily increasing throughout the United States. He declared that it was comparatively easy to clear up the old saloons or public-houses because they were in the open. To-day there are 32,000 'speakeasies' in the City of New York which he described as breeding-places for crime and prostitution. It was impossible to eradicate 'speakeasies,' he said, because they sprang up overnight like mushrooms." (*Islamic Review*, vol. xviii, p. 58.)



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punishment by Nature in the form of some terrible disease has led to the discovery of a remedy administered to a wrongdoer to protect him against various wasting illnesses. The discovery of such a remedy would obviate the need of carefulness, and give the wrongdoer *carte blanche* to indulge his wicked passions. The human blood ought to be saved from further vitiation; but excess in self-indulgence, a necessary sequel of the contemplated injection remedies, will hasten on the state of physical wreck, which, in its turn, will engender and attract a number of deadly diseases—among them premature senility. *Why should we not think of some moral injection to obviate the necessity of a physical one in this respect?*

But there are many other evils, apart from sexual vice, which are steadily undermining the superstructure of the so-called civilized nations. These have invented poison-gas and liquid fire for the destruction of one another; yet syphilis, consumption, and other terrible diseases give the same result, but in a form even more terrible. Besides adultery of an unbridled nature, there are other factors making for immediate downfall. Drinking, gambling, cheating, and polite robbery, indulged in even by the so-called weaker sex; the lynching of negroes; murder, fighting, racial prejudice, usury, capitalism whose aim it is to rob labour of its rightful dues, exploitation, and all the rest. Want of filial regard and neglect of all moral and social bonds in the name of freedom are among the chief features of the age. Libertinism is confounded with liberty. These conditions present an awful prospect and can be no guarantee for the continuance of any of the present conditions of apparent prosperity. The fate of Pompeii waits at the door of many a town in the Western world. "Our history," so says the *Sign of the Times* of America, "will parallel that of Rome and other nations of history, whose lust and passion sent them with their wine, women, and song to the gates of hell and oblivion. They are paving their way to the infernal regions on this very earth of God." Is such a history worth while? Yet the most pitiable thing in the whole business is the fact that the very writers who are discussing present-day civilization are by so doing accelerating

its destruction. We need not look for any post-grave hell, we have got it here, in the mother-cities of the world. It is a poisonous moral ulcer that has infected the whole system. *But where is its remedy?* Material culture has quite definitely failed to find it; and the same may, to a very great extent, be said of Christianity. The lands of culture and Christianity breed and nurse these vices. America spends millions of dollars on her Foreign Christian Missions. They send missionaries for the purpose of improving the morals of others, but they themselves are confessedly bankrupt of all morality. Christianity has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Whithersoever it has penetrated it has carried in its train drinking and gambling, fornication and adultery.

An invidious comparison of the different teachings of the various creeds in this respect would be profitless. The tree is known by its fruits. The East is cleaner than the West, and among Eastern races the Muslims present a purer life; and this is no rash assertion. Figures and facts substantiate it. We have become impoverished in worldly goods by reason of foreign economic pressure, but moral wealth is ours, which will in the end bring supremacy to the downtrodden race when once it has awakened from the lethargy in which it is at present sunk. Though Muslims live for the most part in hotter climates, yet they are free from venereal disease. We are not wealthy, but there is no unemployment in Muslim lands. Pauper parents with millionaire children are a phenomenon quite unknown to the East.

It is not difficult to find the real cause. Islam is a livable religion, and its practical tenets have produced these happy results. The Qur-án is not a book of impracticable ethics teeming with ideals of a visionary. Other religions preach morality, we know, but the Book of Islam and the teachings of Muhammad have about them the discernible distinction. They neither sermonize on morality in general terms nor do they lose themselves in philosophical conundrums. Islam does not impart its lessons in a confused and jumbled form. Like a lecturer in the anatomical room, it gives the name of and locates every joint and nerve of evil. It probes into each



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individual case, it lays its finger on the diseased part and then puts it under its surgical or other medicinal treatment, as the case may be. A critic may doubt this statement, but let him, for a moment, consider the conditions obtaining in the world in this regard, and discover the causes. Culture has failed; Christianity and other religions have also failed. Islam, though also a religion, wins the race. The why and how of the case are to be found in its tenets, which are both practicable and livable. I quote here a few verses from the Qur-án dealing with this point. No doubt there are other books of religion that speak of these vices, but the Qur-án passes judgment on each and all of them with the emphasis appropriate for each. The Book omits nothing that can in any way affect human morals. But let us turn to the practical side of the business. The question of questions is: What other influence than the Qur-án reformed the wickedest people that the earth of God ever saw, at the advent of Muhammad in Arabia, and brought them to righteousness and clean-living? Islam, shattered though it be economically at the present day, is still everywhere proud of this achievement.

MURDER.—“O you who believe, retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the slain . . .”

“And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding.” (Qur-án, ii. 178-79.)

“And do not kill anyone whom Allah has forbidden except for a just cause.” (Qur-án, xvii. 33.)

SEXUAL VICES.—Adultery comes next to murder in its heinousness. It wrecks domestic happiness utterly and completely. Though passion for sensual indulgence in these days has weakened all sense of moral responsibility in the Western mind, such abnormal conditions must come to an end ere long. When I read of the flood of fornication in the civilized world I think that the punishment prescribed in the Qur-án alone can deter the evil. The Book says: “And go not nigh to fornication; surely it is an indecency and evil is the way” (xvii. 32).

“(As for) the fornicatress and the fornicator, flog each of them, (giving) a hundred stripes, and let not pity for them

detain you in the matter of obedience to Allah, if you believe in Allah and the last day, and let a party of believers witness their chastisement."

"The fornicator shall not marry any but a fornicatress or idolatress, and (as for) the fornicatress, none shall marry her but a fornicator or an idolater; and it is forbidden to the believers." (xxiv. 2 and 3.)

Under the Qur-ánic teachings every woman that embraces Islam has to make a pledge as the women used to do in the days of the Holy Prophet. She must promise that she will not steal, and will not commit fornication, and will not kill her children, and will not bring a calumny which she has herself forged. (Qur-án, lx. 12.)

More than thirteen hundred years have passed since the Qur-án proposed the above pledge. It is as true to-day and applicable to-day, especially in the refined West, as it was in the unpolished Arabia of long ago. Children of illicit connection are killed, even when in the womb. Infanticide, in the form of birth-control, has become a recognized fashion of our time. In this respect and in allusion to the reasons that cause this crime, the Qur-án says: "And do not kill your children for fear of poverty; We give them sustenance and yourselves (too); surely to kill them is a great wrong." (Qur-án, xvii. 31.)

The Sacred Book (iv. 24) also condemns the system of keeping women as mistresses, and brings experimental and companionate marriages under the same category.

**GAMBLING AND DRINKING.**—"O you who believe! intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to stones set up) and (dividing) by arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful." "The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer; will you then desist?"

**CHEATING, ETC.**—"And do not swallow up your property, among yourselves by false means." (Qur-án, ii. 188.)

**FIGHTING AND WAR.**—If there are occasions for self-



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defence against persecution, fighting in such form as the circumstances demand and only to the extent of self-defence, is an indisputable human institution. This cannot be too strongly emphasized. The Prince of Peace came as a Teacher of humanity, but he did not "come for peace," he came "to send fire and sword in the earth." He would have done so, if he could. He also asked some of his disciples to purchase a sword by selling their garments. But perhaps the fit occasion did not arise. He left it to his people of the coming generations to promulgate their own rules of war and they have set the very worst possible example in the matter.

Laity and clergy have walked knee-deep in blood. They are at the same game now. In short, human society needed some ethics of war, some warrior prophet was required to give precept and example. The ambiguous words of Jesus, as quoted above, have had terrible repercussions throughout the world. Israel, with Ramachandra and Krishna—the two Indian Prophets of their times—took harsh measures against their enemies: they knew no distinction between a civilian and a belligerent in the hostile camp.

In our day the Hague Tribunal has tried to meet the situation, but the Great War set all its rules at naught, as its decision had not, on man, the binding force of a Divine institution.

Muhammad appeared as the Last Teacher in the world of religion. He brought the Final Message from the Most High. The code of life he promulgated for man, under Divine Revelation, would have remained imperfect, if the occasion that necessitated the unsheathing of the sword had not arisen in his lifetime. It came, and he made the code complete.

This subject really needs a separate chapter, and I will write on it later on, in detail, but here I give the ruling principles, deduced from the Qur-án and the ways of the Prophet, that govern martial movements in Islam.

*Muslims should fight only against those that are fighting against them. They should not exceed the limit of the bare necessity of the war, in any case.*

Fighting is a defensive measure in Islam. The Holy

Book does not give countenance to any offensive or aggressive step. The wars of some of the Christian nations of Europe are more in the nature of Jewish than Islamic wars. I may sum up the contrast between the two briefly thus: the Jewish wars were wars of extermination and so were the fightings of Ramachandra and Krishna, in India, some thousand years ago; while wars were undertaken by Muslims as a defensive measure to save themselves from extermination by the enemy.

I quote here only a few verses from the Qur-án that set forth the basic principle of the matter.

"And fight in the way of Allah with *those who fight with you and do not exceed the limits*; surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits." "And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter; and do not fight with them at the sacred mosque until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers." "But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." "And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah; *but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.*" (Qur-án, ii. 190-93.)

RACIAL PREJUDICE.—The Father of democracy, as Muhammad can be rightly styled, spoke the following words on the day of his final pilgrimage to Mecca, in a sermon that proved to be his last, for he left the world within a few months of its utterance: "*The aristocracy of old time is trampled under my feet. The Arab has no superiority over him that is not an Arab, and he that is not Arab has no superiority over the Arab. All are children of Adam, and Adam was made of earth.*"

The Arabs of the days of the Prophet were prouder of their race than are the white people of our days in the West. But the aristocracy of old time was uprooted by the Great Advocate of equality between man and man, and it is that equality alone which can eradicate racial prejudice. The world is on its way to universalism, and the work of Muhammad in this connection will very soon be complete. The Qur-án speaks very strongly of this equality on different



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occasions, but all its words may be epitomized in the truth promulgated by the Sacred Book, when it says,<sup>1</sup> they are equal members of the family of God, be they white or black, colourless or coloured.

UNEMPLOYMENT.—This is one of the curses of modern civilization, though an immediate result of the war between Capitalism and Socialism. Both go to extremes. Neither nationalization of individual earnings nor allowing capital to fleece labour is a right solution of the question; though inequitable distribution of wealth, such as we see to-day, is at the root of the whole trouble. Nevertheless its equal distribution among all units of society is scarcely practicable. It would kill all incentive to work. Everyone must have something to live upon, but human society will never be without unfortunate people who come to poverty through causes beyond their control. Sometimes they become incapacitated, and charity alone can in such cases meet their need. Islam has always been free from the curse of unemployment. The Qur-án<sup>2</sup> gives a golden rule to meet all the ups and downs of the case. It orders the Muslim to pay what is equitably due to others; it orders him to pay them even more than is their due; and last of all, it recommends us to treat strangers in the way we treat our own relatives and kinsfolk. This subject will be dealt with later on.

USURY.—“Those who swallow down usury cannot arise except as one whom the devil has prostrated by (his) touch does rise. That is because they say, Trading is only like usury; and Allah has allowed trading and forbidden usury. To whomsoever then the admonition has come from his Lord, then he desists, he shall have what has already passed, and his affair is in the hands of Allah; and whoever returns (to it)—these are the inmates of the fire: they shall abide in it.” “Allah does not bless usury, and He causes charitable deeds to prosper, and Allah does not

<sup>1</sup> “(All) people are a single nation.” (Qur-án, ii. 213.)

<sup>2</sup> “Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful.” (Qur-án, xvi. 90.)

love any ungrateful sinner." "Surely they who believe and do good deeds and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate—they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve." "O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah and relinquish what remains (due) from usury, if you are believers." "But if you do (it) not, then be apprised of war from Allah and His Apostle; and if you repent, then you shall have your capital; neither shall you make (the debtor) suffer loss, nor shall you be made to suffer loss." (Qur-án, ii. 275-79.)

"O you who believe! do not devour usury, making additions again and again, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, that you may be successful." "And guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the unbelievers." (Qur-án, iii. 129-30.)

FILIAL PIETY.—"And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve (any) but Him and goodness to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them (so much as) 'Ugh' nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word." "And make yourself submissively gentle to them with compassion, and say: O my Lord! have compassion on them as they brought me up (when I was) little." (Qur-án, xvii. 23-24.)

I do not deny the existence of such laws in other penal codes, but they are passed as man-made laws, and can be evaded, if one can break them without being detected. It is not the evil itself, but it is "being found out" that sometimes keeps a man away from sin. But if he believes in the existence of the Omnipresent and All-Knowing God, Who has to take account of all our actions and Who reads even the hidden thoughts of our hearts, we are compelled to shun all forbidden things. This explains the difference that exists in this respect between Muslims and others, and why the former, comparatively speaking, are far less guilty of wrongdoing than the non-Muslims, more especially as regards offences against decency.



## “REND YOUR HEART”

## “REND YOUR HEART, AND NOT YOUR GARMENTS”

By AL-HAJJ LORD HEADLEY

FOR some months past, those who have been identified with the good work of establishing the Nizamiah Mosque in London have been subjected to a running fire of hostile criticism in the Press of India, Ceylon, South Africa, and other places abroad.

The attacks are all more or less of an abusive and vulgar character, and I cannot quite make out in what way the Trustees of the London Nizamiah Fund and other institutions have offended the clique of malcontents. Only two explanations seem possible: one is that they are very jealous at our success, and the other is that they hope to produce an upheaval in the course of which they may secure a few pickings.

It is rather difficult to understand why it is that there should be such an expenditure of spite and venom, because so far as I know there is no reason for this ebullition of ill feeling. I for one am not aware of having done anything to create this unpleasant atmosphere, and I do not think I have many enemies.

My object in quoting the following passages from a lecture, “The Strength of Islam,” delivered in 1927, is to give the actual words used in order that people may form a correct opinion of the views I then expressed, and to which I now adhere for exactly the same reasons I then gave.

### REASON AND SCIENCE

“There is nothing in Islam which is in any way revolting to our reason or our scientific discoveries, and I have been surprised and pleased in recent years to find so many people in all classes in England who have entirely abandoned a belief in any *necessity* for the dogmas. I have, for example, frequently described our simple Faith, and have been gratified by the remark: ‘Why, that is my belief. Is that really

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Islam? If so, then I must be a Muslim.' My reply has been: 'You are certainly one, though you may not like to openly avow it just at present, out of fear of adverse criticism.' I have then usually repeated the unfavourable Christian animadversions which were passed on me at the time of my conversion to Islam.

"When I openly avowed the Muslim Faith in 1913, members of my family came to me with expressions of the gravest concern because I had deserted the religion of my fathers, and they assured me most positively that salvation was impossible for me now that I had taken the terrible step. I pointed out that, though I was willing to admit that I might deserve to be damned for the sins which I had committed, I would never believe that the God of Mercy and Justice to whom I had prayed all my life would be so unjust as to pass such a terrible sentence as 'everlasting damnation' on me for being an honest man and telling the truth about my beliefs to Him 'to whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid.'"

### ELASTICITY IN RELIGION

"There must be nothing rigid in a universal Faith except only the *firm belief in the One and Only God and the Revelations made through His Holy Prophets*. God sees into the heart, and those who worship Him in *Spirit and in Truth* are not to be cast from the fellowship of the faithful merely on account of some set of conditions peculiar to climates or customs or particulars regarding habits ingrained by long use in certain nationalities.

"I have always looked upon Islam as fitted for the *whole of the human race and for all time*, and I have thought that the spirit of the great Faith which we profess with so much delight and happiness soars far above petty conventionalities. Moses and Jesus were for the Jews, but Islam is for Humanity without any distinction as to race or climate, and it is this which, in my humble opinion, will make the reasonable teachings of Muhammad prevail in the end. It is much to be regretted that puritanical teachings have contributed so much towards



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the retardation of our efforts to spread the ideals of true Islam in the Western world.

“ The precepts to be found in Leviticus might have been desirable or necessary amongst a lot of savages thousands of years ago, but these teachings are quite out of place and ridiculous in the twentieth century.

“ In this age of reason it is intolerable to be asked to believe that certain forms and ceremonies are necessary to salvation. What I mean is this: that religion which insists that non-observance of forms and ceremonies is to be visited with the same punishment as the commission of sin, cannot be expected to find any favour with the mass of intelligent people.

“ For example, if you are going to tell the Esquimo that he must perform his ablutions with ice or snow, and take off his shoes before going into his Mosque of block-ice, you will make but a few converts to Islam in that direction.

“ If you insist on the Yorkshire, or indeed any British farmer, giving up his dish of bacon and eggs or his glass of beer—a diet which has been found very wholesome for many generations—and tell him that its continuance is going to *jeopardize his chances of salvation*, you will fail to convince him of the breadth and sincerity of Islam.

“ If you make it a *sine qua non* that the business city man is to say his prayers openly, and with the usual prostrations, five times a day, you will not make many converts. What is very easy for the Arab, with his loose and inexpensive garments and ample sandy desert surroundings, will be impossible for the busy city man clad in expensive clothes. The idea of kneeling down and prostrating in wet and muddy streets is an absurd one. Such a man will have to consider his tailor’s bill, and will not think this sort of thing can be necessary for his salvation—the surroundings are unsuitable, and the acquisition of eternal happiness should not depend upon whether a man is born in Mecca or Old Broad Street.

“ If you take the puritanical line which forbids coffee and tobacco and looks upon all pleasure as sinful, you will find but little favour amongst those who wish to worship the one

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and only God and thank Him continually for the *use* of His wonderful gifts.

“A religion which is hide-bound and bigoted can never become world-wide, as we wish Islam to be. There must be great elasticity, so as to bring all the nations of the earth under one beneficent canopy which I cannot help regarding as the protecting wings of the Almighty.

“In advancing our Faith we should, I think, only insist upon the essentials in the first instance, for these constitute the spirit of Islam—firm belief in the One God and a surrender to His Almighty Will, belief in the messages divinely sent through His Holy Prophets, and the carrying into effect of the highest order of beneficence to all our fellow-creatures on this earth—and there is to my mind no reason to force any other belief on people, if by doing so we run the risk of doing harm to our cause, turning them away from Islam. Win first the essentials, and the minor points will follow almost as a matter of course.”

### WEST MEETS EAST

“It has always seemed strange to me that my very earliest ideas about religion, crude though they doubtless were, and utterly at variance with the strictly Christian and evangelical surroundings in which my youth was passed, coincided so nearly with the Muslim Faith as it was revealed to me on many occasions in later life. It looks as though a spark of Islamic fire had been permitted to brighten up from the embers of forgotten or dormant truth; and it has sometimes seemed, to my possibly over-fanciful vision, as though a slender ray of light had shot through the rather heavy spiritual atmosphere of the Western world and proclaimed the receptivity of the West for Islamic truths. I am unable to account for the origin of these ideas of my early childhood, because none of my people—parents, uncles, aunts, and others—were in the least degree Eastern or well informed about Eastern affairs. They probably had a sort of rough idea that the Muslims were to be found somewhere amongst the ‘Jews, Turks, Infidels, and



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Heretics' mentioned in one of the Christian collects; and the truths of the Muslim Faith, with its beautiful precepts of resignation and beneficence as expounded by our Holy Prophet, were unknown to them. I have never been able to quite understand why the Eastern Faith of Islam should be less acceptable than the Orthodox Greek Church, the Romish or the Protestant Churches, all of which were equally from the East."

I think I can foresee that, as time goes on, Islam will be the means of bringing about such a revulsion of feeling against the abuse of alcoholic stimulants that drunkenness will be unknown. But this stage will not be reached all at once—it must come gradually, and with it will appear the essential recognition of universal brotherhood which aims at doing good because it is right and fair to all our neighbours. In this consideration science comes to our aid; for the questions as to the most suitable food and drink may be ordinarily left to the judgment and common sense of the people living in the district, as well as to scientific research and sanitation. Why has London such a low death-rate? With its 8,000,000 inhabitants, it is perhaps the cleanest and best kept city in the world, and this is brought about by a due regard for common-sense principles, and we see the laws of God respected.

There are no limitations to the Islamic Faith; it is intensely practical, and the moment you have agreed upon the universal principles of duty to God and your neighbour, and have embraced the altruistic idea of living for others, you will find a measure of that happiness which passeth all understanding. It is quite futile to lay down any fixed rules as to the salvation or condemnation of human beings based upon a consideration of their environment, for it is conceivable that what might be permissible in one place might be quite the reverse in another.

With regard, then, to the animadversions of the grumblers who accuse me of advocating any particular kind of food or drink and object to my alleged advocacy of dancing, I would say, please read these words written above, and you will understand my position clearly.

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With regard to the dancing accusation, it is quite possible that in the course of casual conversation with some of my young Muslim friends I may have discussed dancing, and whatever I said may have been repeated and distorted; or it may have been an unworthy plot to catch me in a trap into which I might easily fall.

It is so easy for an utterly irresponsible person to take up a pen and malign those of whom he may be jealous or may personally dislike. Very few may give credence to the malicious detractor, but *some* of the mud he throws will stick, and his statements have to be contradicted.

A rather glaring case of false accusation arose in the year 1923, when Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and I undertook the Pilgrimage to Mecca. We were accused of collecting money for the Mosque from wealthy Egyptians and not accounting for the funds! As far as my memory serves me, we made no collection in Egypt on that occasion, but in 1926 we made a collection in various big towns in South Africa in aid of the Muslim Literary Fund, and all the money was carefully accounted for and the balance sheet properly made out.<sup>1</sup>

I wish all those who read these lines to understand clearly that I disclaim having ever encouraged anyone in the eating of pork or drinking of beer, and that I have never made a point of encouraging dancing, and that I very clearly understand that there are many other far worse practices which beset our lives. I should say that telling lies, bearing false testimony, *and failing in the duty of true brotherhood by taking away the characters of others, are all crimes which may be punished far more severely than eating a rasher of bacon, drinking a glass of beer, or joining in a merry country dance.* I rather wish to emphasize these points because they vitally affect our chances of making Islam respected and followed in the West.

I am fully aware that there are some Muslinss to whom outward signs and observances, such as performing the Rakats five times a day, the keeping strictly the Ramadān Fast, and making the Pilgrimage to Mecca, are of far greater importance than speaking the truth. Now I put it just the

<sup>1</sup> See *Islamic Review* for the years 1926-1927.



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other way, and say that *the man who has spoken the truth and been good to his fellow-creatures* will find favour before Allah, even if he has failed to observe what may be properly called the outward ceremonials.

### THE EXAMPLES WE SHOULD TRY TO SET

As Muslims following the latest Revelation from our Prophet, we must endeavour to take a higher spiritual line than do those who have placed themselves at the mercy of man-made dogmas which are basically unsound and have not God's blessing or authority: besides which, such unsound teachings appear ridiculous in the eyes of educated people in this twentieth century. Nothing kills a specious or faulty suggestion so quickly as ridicule. It is ridiculous to think that a belief in certain Christian dogmas is necessary to salvation, and it is equally ridiculous to suppose that a Muslim who leads a good life and is true to Allah and to his fellow-creatures is unworthy of divine favour because he finds himself unable, through change of circumstances, to conform strictly to observances which, though desirable, are not essential.

To sum up the whole situation, we are up against two kinds of detractors:

1. *The Growlers*.—These are mostly people who have persistently refused to do anything, and have shown much jealousy at the successful efforts of those who have put their backs into the work. These are not usually malicious; they are simply lazy, or have lost heart, preferring to look on and say how much better they could have done it.

2. In the second category come the *Libellers*, who do not hesitate to tell lies about us in the hopes of bettering themselves at the expense of Islam. Such people are very contemptible, but they are, at the same time, very mischievous.

“Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of evil.”  
(Joel ii. 13.)

These words of the Prophet Joel convey a message of

mighty import. Being interpreted they mean: Give up slandering and backbiting, and show by your *change of heart* that you can face your Maker without fear. Tear out of your heart all that is unworthy and mean, and never give place to the Evil One.

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### THE DEATHLESS NATION

By SHAIKH MUSHĪR HUSAIN KIDWĀ'Ī OF GADIA  
(Barrister-at-Law)

RECENTLY has happened an incident, extremely tragic and sad, which has, as it were, ensured the immortality of the Muslim nation.

A cable from Jeddah, dated May 24th, reports that the steamer *Asia* with fifteen hundred pilgrims was lying at anchor in the outer harbour at 8 p.m. on May 21, 1930, when a fire broke out on board and spread very rapidly.

"The whole vessel this morning," adds the cable, "was still a raging furnace. One hundred and twelve pilgrims are missing. It is feared that they have perished.

"Fine bravery was displayed by the officers and crew of the *Asia* and native boatmen in rescuing the pilgrims struggling in the water. They even climbed on board the inferno and took off pilgrims, many of whom were kneeling at prayers amid flames."

Another cable graphically describes the dreadful scene thus:

"Survivors of this disaster, in which it is now feared two hundred have perished, relate that the heat was so terrific that the skulls of many victims lying on the blazing decks burst like pistol-shots and brains seethed out like boiling lead."

The cable ends with the information that "many of the pilgrims, even under these terrible conditions, refused to try to escape and remained praying with their faces turned to Mecca."

The point which is particularly to be noticed in this tragedy



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is that nearly all the people were Muslims—the crew, the boatmen, and the passengers on board the ship *Asia*. The passengers belonged to different countries, speaking different languages, and were of different nationalities and races, coming from different stages in society, of different ages, of both sexes, but WITH ONE COMMON FACTOR—ISLAM, and it was Islam that infused in them that courage and heroism which defied the skull-bursting terrific heat on board the burning ship, which defied the most torturous death while in communion with their God.

That nation which consisted of such death-defying people could not die soon. Its life has been ensured on this earth for a long, long time to come by the demonstration of this wonderful bravery.

But physical courage and bravery only, high and noble though it be, cannot make a nation deathless, immortal, and ever-living. What can make a nation really ever-living is when physical courage is combined in it with soul-force.

Who can deny that it was an unparalleled demonstration in our modern times of a combination of physical bravery with soul heroism which was witnessed on board the ship *Asia*, when skulls were bursting with heat, and yet many persons refused to try to escape as they preferred even at that moment to be in communion with their Maker, their Life-giver, their Sustainer, their Cherisher—the One fountainhead of all that is good and lovely and beautiful, the One spirit, the One soul which has given birth to all souls?

The Holy Qur-án says that God infused His Own Soul or Spirit in human being when He created or evolved it.

An ocular demonstration of this was given to the world on board the burning ship *Asia*. There were on the decks of that burning ship not one or two or three but, the cable says, “many” who had triumphed over death, and when physical bodies all around were turning into ashes their souls were in communion with Him Who is Ever-living and Self-existing, Whom neither idleness overtakes nor sleep, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. There are no doubt other brave and courageous people on this earth. There are

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peoples who at the time of danger show great bravery. There are even certain idolatrous and pagan peoples who show very great courage in battle and war. In fact the more civilized a nation becomes the less courageous it becomes. And have not even brutes and beasts also shown courage? Is not the lion supposed to be the most courageous animal? Birds and animals are imbued with self-sacrificing courage also. Even a little bird would endanger its life to save its young ones from danger.

What is most uncommon is, as I have said above, a combination of physical courage with the power of the soul, and it was this combination that made a Muslim excel the whole creation.

It was through this combination that the untutored Arabian performed the most marvellous miracle the world ever saw in its millions-of-years-old history. In barely ten short years, with this combination, he transformed the shepherd people of Arabia, who in intellect were not far above the flocks they shepherded and in moral conditions were probably more depraved than those flocks were, into superiors of angels, the very best specimens of humanity on this earth, and in less than a century it was his influence that transformed the Arab free-booters who had been cutting each other's throat for generations and generations past into world-civilizers, great empire-builders, and greater character-builders. Those wild, malicious Arabs who had refused to be influenced by the Judaism and Christianity of their neighbours, whom even the great father of Moses and Jesus, namely Abraham himself, had failed to influence, although one of his sons had established himself in the heart of Arabia—in Mecca itself—who had refused to be influenced by the civilizing effect of the old Egyptian, Babylonian, or Indian philosophy, or by Roman and Grecian culture, became by one touch of Muhammad (Peace of Allah on him!) the civilizers and teachers of the then known world of Asia, of Africa, and even of the ignorant Europe where the sun of enlightenment, knowledge, reason, and science had, thanks to the intolerance and bigotry of the Christian priests, gone under the darkest shadow of an eclipse.



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Those Arabs who had never conquered an inch of land and used to spend all their energy in destroying one tribe or other of their own race became, by one touch of Muhammad (Peace of Allah be on him!) the conquerors of about half of the then known world. It was not the Arabs alone who were so transformed and metamorphosed by the one touch of Muhammad. The cut-throats, the white-wolf worshippers of Turkestan or Central Asia, and the degenerated fire-worshippers of Persia, also yielded miraculously to that one touch of Muhammad and became great conquerors and, in the case of Persia, greater civilizers. The touch of Muhammad was miraculous indeed. The Persians, the Afghans, the Turks, the Indians, and the Egyptians all were elevated by that touch. All have degenerated when that touch has weakened. But the kneeling of so many Muslims—I would not be surprised if many ladies were among them—in prayer amid flames and their refusal to leave the blazing decks of the big ship *Asia* have demonstrated that the Great Teacher, the Great Exemplar, still lives as he lived over thirteen centuries ago to inspire a number of his followers with unique physical courage and with more unique soul-force. At the time of trial Jesus Christ is said to have been himself frightened. I as a Muslim do not believe it, but this is what the Christian Gospels themselves say, that Jesus complained to God at the critical moment of the weakness of his “flesh.”

I do not believe it as a Muslim, but the Christian Gospels themselves say that when put on the cross Jesus (“the son of God”) cried out despondently: “O God, O God, why hast Thou forsaken me.” If the Gospels be correct (and I am sure they are not correct), Jesus Christ’s behaviour at the time of danger would have made his followers much less courageous physically and much more weak in the soul-power than those followers of Muhammad who knelt in prayer amid flames and who refused to leave the burning ship *Asia*.

Never, even for a moment, in his life of arduous trials and terrible dangers did that orphan child—Muhammad, the one man in the history of the world who deserved superhuman

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claims but repeatedly declared in public, "I am but a man"—lost either physical courage or his trust in God.

It was as a MAN that he became the greatest and best teacher and exemplar over thirteen centuries ago, and it is as a MAN—unequalled even after a lapse of about fourteen centuries of marvellous progress and developments—that he lives to teach and to set an example not only to the Arabs, not only to the Persians, not only to the Turks, but also to the people of the whole world—to all races, black, white, or brown—of Africa, Europe, or Asia, of distant America or Australia.

May he live for ever and ever—as to my mind he is certain to live—to continue to remain the ONE redeeming feature of this "abode of sin," the ONE cause of joy in this "vale of tears," and the one Real creation in this great illusion (*maya*). It is a pity no doubt that although there are many individuals in every Muslim country and race who possess those particular Islamic qualities which Muhammad (Peace be upon him!) had created in the Arabians, there is no nation at the present moment which is, as a nation, gifted with those virtues that became the characteristics of the race, whether it was the Arabic or the Persian or the Afghan or the Berber or the Turkish, as soon as it adopted Islam. Now that the Arabs and the Persians and the Afghans and the Berbers and lastly the Turks have fallen as they departed from the life and conduct chalked out by the Great Reformer, and because of their latter-day indifference not only to moral attributes but also to science and learning, discipline and fraternity, democracy and communism taught by Islam, I feel sure that a new nation is soon to be born which will adopt the Islam of Muhammad (which is different from the Islam of the latter-day unlearned, superstitious, and lethargic Mullahs and 'Hojas) and be a true follower of that ever-living Exemplar. It will then reconquer the world, not only territorially, but also morally, and intellectually combining material progress and spiritual advancement. It will rejuvenate the old Muslim races also and reunite them as one federated nation with the old Islamic international outlook. May it be born soon—very, very soon—before the materialistic Europe destroys itself, if the last



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standard-bearers of Islam—the valiant Turks—cannot keep that banner aloft now and have no more ambition to become a world-power again, and are content to be a tenth-rate European state! Europe, with its present materialistic bent of mind, cannot last long. A new power with better and nobler ideals should come into being soon, now that the old ones are all giving way, if the masterpiece of this universe is not to degenerate into a cunning, cruel, and self-centred animal. It is possible that a new Reformation may take place in Europe itself. It is possible that this Reformation may begin again in Germany, and the German nation may leave off Paulinism (so-called Christianity) altogether this time and adopt true Christianity, that is ISLAM, and thus take the lead of four hundred million people scattered all over the world, and so gain its place under the sun of which European nations deprived it after it had made tremendous sacrifices to achieve it. Whichever nation that may be, one nation is sure to take up the banner of Islam and give a new turn to the present civilization. May this be soon—very, very soon! May, through the teachings of Muhammad and through his example, the great Muslim nation take the reins of the government of the world in its hands, again united with one iron chain of fraternity, holding together the one never breakable cord of Allah, and inspired with one aspiration of freeing the whole of humanity from the subservience and bondage and worship of all idols—the idol of conceit, of greed, of exploitation, of immorality, of ignorance, of bigotry, of stagnation, of idleness, and be a model for all the people and all the nations, by a combination of physical heroism and soul-power like those Muslims who refused to escape and who knelt in prayer while skulls were bursting with heat on the blazing decks of the *Asia*!

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**Friday Prayer and Sermon.**—At the London Muslim Prayer House—111, Camden Hill Road, London, W.8, close to Notting Hill Gate Tube Station—every Friday at 1 p.m. **Sunday Lectures** at 7.30 p.m. **Qur-án and Arabic Classes**—every Sunday at 5.30–7 p.m. Nearest Tube Station: Notting Hill Gate.

**Service, Sermon, and Lectures** every Sunday at the Mosque, Woking, at 3.15 p.m. Every Friday at 1 p.m.

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

## AFTER-EFFECTS OF THE GREAT WAR

By SHAIKH MUSHĪR HUSAIN KIDWĀ'Ī OF GADIA  
(Barrister-at-Law)

*(Continued from July (1930), "Islamic Review," p. 241.)*

### 9. WHY ISLAM SUCCEEDS WHEN CHRISTIANITY FAILS

The Great War has exposed in its nakedness the uselessness of Christianity. As a religion it has failed to guide man in a crisis. It has failed to give him any consolation. When a crucial moment arrived Christianity failed in giving right guidance to man in his mundane life and gave a wrong notion of God Himself. So the great catastrophe resulted in dissipating the faith of the people in that God whom Christianity had set before the people. But if they were to turn to Islam and to the life-work and life-history of Muhammad they would not only find a true guidance by him in all their own works, but also the right conception of God from whose attributes, as presented by Islam, any catastrophe in the work of man or nature can detract nothing. While Islam has proved a success both as a Faith and an Institution, Christianity has proved a failure in every respect.

The Rev. T. Rohndda Williams of Wales "gave a challenging address" at the City Temple only a few months back, as the new Chairman of the Congregational Union. He said: "It is the misfortune of the Church that the creeds which still hold a formal place in most of them are, for the greater part, impossible of belief to educated and intellectual men and women. The pulpit is suspected of trimming and prevarication and of something very near to intellectual dishonesty. Men to-day want their religious teaching to be above board, as scientific teaching is, and until it is so the Church will not win the confidence of men who have been influenced by the scientific temper and habit. I think the Church has a great deal to learn from scientists in regard to reverence for truth. . . . Traditional Christianity has already ceased to be the religion



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of a good many of our Churches and of a still larger number of our ministers."

Islamic belief can satisfy "educated and intellectual men and women." It did satisfy before even great philosophers and scientists. The Islamic conception of God can certainly satisfy men with even the least religious bent of mind. Islam has induced persons of other religions also to reform their religions on intellectual lines. Hindus, the oldest civilized people living on this earth, found the need of reformation after Islam. They produced not only Gurū Nānak, with his Sikhism, but have also founded systems like the Brahmū Samaj and the Arya Samaj. Each of these systems have obviously profited by the Islamic ideals and conceptions. They have tried to copy Islam in the main principles. But I ask these brethren of mine: Why do you try to make an imperfect copy of the original when the original itself is not unattainable? Those who want a perfect ideal, a perfect Faith, can easily come to Islam.

As far as Christianity is concerned, Luther took the Reformation upon himself. He also tried to copy Islam and its ideals. On the lines of Islam, Luther tried to reform Paulinism, misnamed Christianity. *But Paulinism or Christianity had already been reformed centuries before Luther was born, by a man far and far and far superior and millions of degrees better than Luther.* The Prophet Muhammad had reformed Paulinism and restored Christianity to its original purity. He had restored Christianity to its real and original author—the miraculous Christ, who has been praised nowhere more appropriately than in the Qur-án—who has been given an ascendancy in this world and the next by Islam. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, centuries before Luther, purged Christianity of all those pagan beliefs and images which St. Paul had introduced into it. What is Islam but a reformed and purified Christianity and Judaism combined? I used to say to my Jewish and Christian friends that I am a Jew and a Christian at the same time that I am a Muslim. I believe in all the Biblical Prophets. As to Jesus, I personally bear him not only great reverence but also extreme love. They

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say Christ was a Jew. I say by birth he might have been a Jew, but he was a true Muslim in faith. Jesus tried to reform the religious systems then prevailing in the vicinity of Palestine, particularly among the Israelites. He tried to reform Judaism, which had lost altogether its spirituality and had become a combination of unrelaxable, rigid rituals only. He tried to extend the boundaries of Judaism. Like Abraham, Christ was a Muslim in its most true sense. While Abraham manifested his readiness to sacrifice his beloved son for the love of his One and only God, Jesus was ready to sacrifice himself for the same One and only God. Christ had completely resigned himself to the will of God. So lost was Christ in the love of God that he was lost to this world and to his own self. All his thoughts were for the "Father in Heaven." All his thoughts were for "Thy Kingdom come." A Muslim poet has beautifully said:

"Mardane Khuda Khuda na bashand  
Lekin zi Khuda juda na bashand."

("Godly men are not God, but they are not separate from God.") Jesus was undoubtedly not separated from God.

I say Jesus was a true Muslim because I have seen with my own eyes a Muslim prototype of Jesus Christ—a truly *Christian Muslim*—a better Christian and more Christ-like in his life and his beliefs than any Christian that I have ever come across or ever heard of, although I have spent about a score of years of my life in different parts of Christendom. Wāris 'Alī Shāh of Dewa, who was the twentieth-century prototype of Christ, had himself travelled in all the parts of Christendom. He was loved and respected by men of every persuasion. Hindus in India flocked to him and recognized him as their *avatar* or *Guru*. Muslims of different countries came to him and held his hand as their *Murshid*. Christians and Jews also approached him. Physically he lived the simple, pure, and chaste life which Christ himself lived. Mentally he was always with his God; always in love with his Sustainer. The Qur-án has said that God "breathed His Own Soul into man," "*Nafakhto fihī min rūhī.*" It is only



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when you see such men as Wāris 'Alī Shāh, a true Muslim and yet a true Christian, that you feel convinced of the reality of godliness in man. The body of such persons becomes, as it were, transparent and one can see their godly soul. Small wonder that Christ said he was the son of God! But he could not possibly have used the word "son" in any carnal or physical sense. He could not possibly have degraded his God by attributing passions to Him when he himself had conquered passions and all worldly desires. Christ was an Easterner. Wāris 'Alī Shāh was an Easterner. So Wāris 'Alī Shāh could understand Christ, could understand the mentality, the character, and even the sayings of Christ far better than any European could. He had developed all those spiritual powers which Christ had. I myself witnessed on several occasions that my inmost thoughts had found a reflection in his pure mind and he could reveal them. But he never said that he was a begotten son of God. He was a descendant of Muhammad lineally. He had learnt the Qur-án by heart. He had performed seven pilgrimages to Mecca. He was a true Muslim.

When he lived the life of a Hindu *avatar* or *Rishi*, or of Jesus Christ himself, when he adopted the creed of "Love," he perhaps wanted to demonstrate that those who would like to follow the old Rishis or Christ should also do so through Islam and through Muhammad.

The so-called Christians in Europe are certainly dissatisfied with the Christianity which was put before them by St. Paul. They are dissatisfied with Christianity even after the Reformation effected by Luther. Now I invite them to accept the reformation effected by a man better than Paul. I invite them to become true Muslims and thereby become true Christians. Those who would like to imitate the life of Christ and to develop their own spiritual powers would be able to do that under Islam as Wāris 'Alī Shāh and several other Muslims have done. Others who would prefer a more worldly life, who would like to become soldiers, or statesmen, or scientists, or industrialists, or labourers, or workers, they could become 'Omars, and Khālids, and Abu 'l-Hasans, and Abū

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Raihāns, and tens of thousands of other Muslim heroes in every walk of life and yet remain within the four walls of the Ten Commandments or of the Sermon on the Mount. They could become the most civilized, cultured, sociable, active, useful citizens of any state and yet not lose those human virtues which distinguish man from other mammals. This brings me to another proposition, i.e. that the Islamic conception of God was the pivot of all the phenomenal worldly or material progress which the Muslim nation made in a period of but a few years. The first object Muhammad achieved by laying incessant stress upon the unity of God was that one ideal was set before mankind. Every Muslim, of whatever country and of whatever race, whether rich or poor, had to look up to one Rabbu 'l-'Alamīn for all that he needed. He was impressed with the idea that the One Supreme Being made no distinction of any kind between man and man. To Him the rich and the poor were alike. Perfect democracy began at once to prevail in all the Mosques everywhere. It prevails all over the world to-day where the beggars and the kings meet on common ground. Very recently an old woman presented a petition about a grievance of hers to the Muslim Ruler of Hyderabad (India) in a Mosque which he attends and stands therein shoulder to shoulder with his "lowest of the low" subjects.

The God-idea in Islam is not philosophical only. Its object is *not* confined to the betterment of the after-life prospects alone. To a Muslim, God is his living Guide in this life also. The God in Islam possesses the highest, the noblest, the best conceivable attributes. Allah has ninety-nine attributive names, which include those of the Scientist (*Hakīm*) and Artist (*Musawwir*). These are His ninety-nine names: 1. *Hū*, He. 2. *Ar-Rabb*, The Creator, The Maintainer, The Nourisher, The Upbringer. 3. *Ar-Rahmān*, The Beneficent, The All-Giver. 4. *Ar-Rahīm*, The Compassionate. 5. *Al-Mālik*, The Master, The Owner. 6. *Al-Malik*, The King. 7. *Al-Quddūs*, The Holy One, The Pure One. 8. *As-Salām*, The Author of Peace, Free from Defects. 9. *Al-Mu'min*, The Granter of Security. 10. *Al-Muhaimin*, The Guardian over



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All. 11. *Al-'Azīz*, The Ever Mighty. 12. *Al-Jabbār*, The All-Compelling, One who brings everything under His will. 13. *Al-Mutakabbir*, The Possessor of All-Greatness, Glory, and Dignity. 14. *Al-Khāliq*, The Creator, The Combiner. 15. *Al-Bārī*, The Maker, The Moulder. 16. *Al-Musawwir*, The Artist, The Fashioner. 17. *Al-Ghaffār*, The Great Forgiver. 18. *Al-Qahhār*, The Great Dominant. 19. *Al-Wahhāb*, The Great Bestower. 20. *Ar-Razzāq*, The Great Provider. 21. *Al-Fattāh*, The Great Opener. 22. *Al-'Alīm*, The All-Knower. 23. *Al-Qābiz*, The Straightener, The Chastener. 24. *Al-Bāsīt*, The Amplifier, The Opener. 25. *Al-Khāfiz*, The Abaser. 26. *Ar-Rāfi'*, The Exalter. 27. *Al-Mu'izz*, The Honourer. 28. *Al-Muzill*, The Debaser. 29. *As-Samī'*, The Ever Hearer. 30. *Al-Basīr*, The All-Seer, The Observer. 31. *Al-Hakam*, The Judge. 32. *Al-'Ādil*, The Just. 33. *Al-Latīf*, The Knower of Subtleties. 34. *Al-Khabīr*, The One who is Aware of Everything. 35. *Al-Halīm*, The Clement, The Meek, The Forbearer. 37. *Al-'Azīm*, The Owner of Greatness. 37. *Al-Ghafūr*, The Pardoner, The Suppressor of Evil Propensities. 38. *Ash-Shakūr*, The Great Grateful. 39. *Al-'Āli*, The Most High. 40. *Al-Kabīr*, The Ever Great. 41. *Al-Hafīz*, The Ever Preserver. 42. *Al-Muqīt*, The Ever Maintainer. 43. *Al-Hasīb*, The Reckoner. 44. *Al-Jalīl*, The Ever Glorious, The Benign. 45. *Al-Karīm*, The Ever Bountiful. 46. *Al-Mujīb*, The Ever Hearer of prayers. 47. *Ar-Raqīb*, The Ever Watchful. 48. *Al-Wāsi'*, All-Comprehending One, The Granter of Felicity and Facilities. 49. *Al-Wadūd*, The Loving. 50. *Al-Hakīm*, The Ever Wise, The Scientist. 51. *Al-Majīd*, The Glorious. 52. *Al-Bā'is*, The Opener of the Tomb, The Resurrector. 53. *Ash-Shādid*, The Witness. 54. *Al-Haqq*, The Truth. 55. *Al-Wakīl*, The Guardian, One who has charge of things, One who can be trusted upon for the charge of affairs. 56. *Al-Qawīy*, The Mighty. 57. *Al-Matīn*, The Firm. 58. *Al-Walīy*, The Friend, The Patron. 59. *Al-Hamīd*, The Ever Praiseworthy. 60. *Al-Muhsī*, The Accountant. 61. *Al-Mubdī*, The Great Originator or Beginner. 62. *Al-Moi'id*, The Restorer. 63. *Al-Momīt*, The One who causes Death. 64. *Al-Mohyī*, The Life-Giver, The Quickener. 65. *Al-Hayy*, The

Ever Living. 66. *Al-Qayyūm*, The Self-subsistent, One who sustains others. 67. *Al-Wājid*, The Finder of Everything. 68. *Al-Wahīd*, The One. 69. *Al-Ahad*, The One who is alone in His attributes. 70. *As-Samad*, The Eternal, The One on whom all depend, and who depends on no one. 71. *Al-Qadīr*, The Powerful. 72. *Al-Muqtadir*, The Possessor of every might and power. 73. *Al-Muqaddim*, The Foregoer, The First of All. 74. *Al-Mu'akhhir*, The One who Ends Everything. 75. *Al-Awwal*, The First. 76. *Al-Ākhir*, The Last. 77. *Az-Zāhir*, The Apparent, The Manifestor, The Essence. 78. *Al-Bātin*, The Within, One who creates essence of things. 79. *Al-Wālī*, The Governor. 80. *Al-Muta'ālī*, The One who is above others. 81. *Al-Barr*, The One of Great Goodness. 82. *Al-Tawwāb*, The Great Forgiver. 83. *Ar-Ra'ūf*, The Lenient, The Kind, specially in warding off trouble or difficulties. 84. *Māli ku 'l-Mulk*, King of all Kingdoms. 85. *Zu 'l-Jalāl wa 'l-Ikrām*, The Possessor of all Glory and Honour, Might and Mercy. 86. *Al-Muqsim*, The Equitable. 87. *Al-Jāmi'*, The Gatherer. 88. *Al-Ghanī*, The One who is above every need, All-Sufficient, The Rich. 89. *Al-Mughnī*, The One who makes others rich, contented and above their needs. 90. *Al-Mu'tī*, The Giver. 91. *Al-Māni'*, The Preventer. 92. *Al-Hādi*, The Guide. 94. *An-Noor*, The Light. 95. *Al-Azli*, The Eternal. 96. *Al-Bāqī*, The Survivor. 97. *Al-Wāris*, The Inheritor. 98. *Ar-Rāshid*, All-Guidance. 99. *As-Sabūr*, The Long Suffering, The Patient.

One can judge from the above given ninety-nine names of the Creator how beneficially and successfully the conception of such a Being can mould the character of man.

## AN APPRECIATION OF HAZRAT 'ALĪ

By MUHAMMAD 'ALĪ AL-HAJJ SALMĪN

WHEN polytheism had spread to the uttermost ends of the earth and the mental and religious outlook for the world was one of unrelieved darkness; when idolatry and superstition had stifled human conscience, and guilt and ignorance were



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everywhere, Islam was silently springing to life within the depths of a heart that belonged to an orphan Arab child.

The light of Islam, emerging from behind the mysterious veil of a sacred heart, was eager to burst like the Sun, through the dense clouds that obscured the world's horizon. It was all agog to attack the darkness of atheism and to flood it with the divine effulgence inherent in itself. It aspired to lead the world, by virtue of the solemn principles of the equality of mankind and the universal brotherhood of humanity, to the heights of progress. But the finger of God was pointing to the necessity of waiting, before the birth of Islam, for the appearance of a being who would lend the most assistance to the Apostle of God in preserving the light of Islam from the violent blast of the winds that sought to quench it.

There is no doubt that, prior to Islam's appearance, there was need for a person who should not only save it from the ceaseless machinations of its foes, but also attain to the mystical heights of virtue and piety, after having experienced all the progressive vicissitudes of human fortune—who should stand side by side with the Prophet of Arabia in propagating the Faith of Islam, and showing himself to be a type of bravery, generosity, gentlemanliness, clemency, kindness, patience, and gratitude.

Then the hidden race of divinity which had remained concealed from the very beginning of the world began to dazzle human eyes with the sudden manifestation of its light. One divine light had already set in the most sacred person of Muhammad (Peace of Allah be on him!), and the other was just preparing to rise on the human world from the divine seat of Allah.

The 13th of Rajab (a Muslim month) marks the birth of a personality—a pearl of great price in the courtyard of the Ka'ba glowing in its full self-illumination. It was a portion of the very divine light of God that appeared in human shape, and proceeded to illuminate the highest heights of human dignity and reverence. He was a person who had no sooner set foot on this earth, than he began to assist the Prophet in the proclamation of the religion of the truth, and of God the

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Almighty. It was that great personality who for the first time, and before all others, pledged his faith to the divine mission of the Prophet of Islam. It was the same 'Alī that espoused the cause of Islam, at the earliest moment before any others had rallied to its support.

It is not unknown to the faithful that this venerable personality is the Caliph of the Muslims, 'Alī, the son of Abū Tālib, through whom were manifested many wondrous deeds, the performance of which, though not outside the scope of human power, has been vouchsafed to very few, and who, having reached the age of understanding, identified himself with self-sacrifice, loyalty, fortitude, and generosity, in a manner that remains almost unprecedented in the annals of the world.

An example of the way in which the practical aspect of 'Alī's life invites imitation is to be observed in the episode arising from an invitation extended by the Prophet to the Quraish (a well-known Arab tribe). Once, when the Prophet had addressed himself to the Quraish, saying: "Is there none who will help me?" everyone remained silent. The question was repeated, and it was only 'Alī, then a thirteen-year-old child, who ventured on a bold reply. He stood up from an obscure corner, and stepping forward a little, said: "O Apostle of God! I will help you." The Prophet clasped him to his breast, and said: "'Alī! thou art my Vazir and Caliph."

Hereafter how 'Alī gave assistance to the Prophet in every possible way is a fact well known to the world. History abounds in instances of 'Alī's bravery, self-sacrifice, humanity, piety, and mental capabilities. Although his merits beggar description nevertheless it is the bounden duty of every literate person, so far as in him lies, by the love he bears to the memory of 'Alī, to testify to his valour, his virtue, and his noble deeds. On the night of Hijrat (when the Prophet fled away to Medina) 'Alī was sleeping in the bed of the Prophet in the shadow, as it were, of non-Muslim Arab enemies as fearlessly as if he cared not twopence for his life. The courage and self-sacrifice wherein he saved the life of the Prophet and the cause of Islam makes that achievement in truth a matchless



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deed. This act of his very clearly suggests the extent by which he had lost himself in the love of the Prophet and Islam! The sacrifices he made for the life of Islam ought in fact to be recorded in gold.

It was 'Alī who leaped into the midst of every battle that was being fought against an overwhelming force of the enemy. And it was 'Alī who, like a lion, tore through the enemies' lines, decapitating the arrogant warriors and the most noted veterans, and having dispersed the whole force of them in a very short time, would return to his camp victorious. He would display such skill and valour on the battlefield that his friends and foes hailed him as absolutely invincible. 'Alī on the battlefield was a most daring and valorous soldier, and in a mosque an excellent figure of piety, humility, and devotion, down whose innocent cheeks tears kept streaming ever for the fear of God. On his Caliph's throne he was a divinely glorified and awe-inspiring King, but within his own house he was but a poor and most needy man who at times sat the whole night long on a torn and rotten sack without closing his eyes for a single moment. He used to mend his own garments whenever wear or tear made itself visible. And sometimes there flowed a river of the Divine Knowledge from him on the pulpit of the mosque, when he would say, "Whatever you want to ask, ask me to-day; to-morrow, when I shall not be alive, you will be sorry that you did not ask such and such thing." Sometimes he would be seen labouring in the gardens of the Jews. In unravelling most intricate propositions concerning political affairs, he was a most far-seeing statesman, and in enforcing the Islamic Code of Law and in judicial decisions he was a judge of a very high order.

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### **Extravagant Claims.**

Interesting examples of the way in which the credit for everything that has been or is regarded as noble and grand in history has been appropriated by the Church as one of its many achievements are exhibited to us daily in such articles

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as appear in its organs. They are really capable of springing surprises even on those who are well<sup>as</sup> acquainted with<sup>as</sup> this peculiar brand of religious literature.

It was through our eagerness to add to our knowledge in this respect that we were staggered to read in the *Baptist Times* (May 15, 1930) a leading article entitled "The Churches and Slavery," which concluded with these words: "It has been the glory of the Christian faith that wherever the Cross has been uplifted, liberty has been achieved. The Church is the guardian of the great causes, and there is no cause more sacred than that of freedom."

These high-sounding words are doubtless heartening enough to those who are ever ready to imbibe their favourite religious nourishment without question, but the point to be decided is whether or not history corroborates this extravagant claim on the part of our contemporary. Is it not a fact that the very slave-ship presented by the English Government to Sir John Hawkins was named the *Jesus*? Again, was not every British subject authorized to raid African villages and carry off their inhabitants as slaves? And did anyone, we ask, see anything religiously wrong about it in those days? And did not Bishop Hopkins of Vermont, a man whose culture and nobility of character gave him very wide influence in all branches of the American Protestant Church, demonstrate that the Bible sanctioned slavery? And did not other theologians take the same ground?

It is hard to avoid these plain questions, and the discouraging answers entailed can be readily understood if we remember that there is no plain condemnation whatever of slavery as an institution anywhere in the New Testament. The plea that the Gospel teaches that all men are the children of God no more carries with it a condemnation of slavery than would the statement that all men are members of a division of the animal kingdom.

Not one word or verse from the Gospels, not one example from the life of Jesus, is quoted. We have to content ourselves with the statement, "It has been the glory of the Christian faith that wherever the Cross has been uplifted, liberty has been achieved."

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The Qur-án is the only book which lays down injunctions against slavery (xlvi. 4; lc. 13). Muhammad is the only Prophet who set an example of giving slaves their liberty. He declares it to be a meritorious act to set a slave free; and Abū Bakr, the first Caliph, exhausted his whole fortune in liberating slaves.

We can very well imagine eminent persons like Lady Simon, whose book *Slavery* inspired the *Baptist Times* to make its wild claims and who had to be corrected by an English friend of ours who was present at a gathering where her ladyship was speaking on "Slavery"—exclaiming, "What about slavery in Muslim countries?" The answer is that if in Arabia and other Muslim countries slavery does exist in some form or other, in face of the unequivocal words of the Qur-án condemning it, the reason for such slavery so existing must be looked for elsewhere and not in the Qur-án or in the teachings of Islam.

### A Marvellous Achievement of Islam.

The few lines following are suggested by a short note which appeared in *Theosophy* (Los Angeles, U.S.A., July, 1930). It says: "The suicide rate for California in 1928 was more than 30 in 100,000. It has been increasing steadily for the last five years, which were the most prosperous years California has yet known. The City of San Diego has the highest suicide rate in the United States, and at the present time the highest on the planet. San Diego has the most equable climate in California and is pre-eminently the Mecca of rich and retired people who have attained worldly success and have nothing on hand but to occupy themselves as they please.

"Frederick L. Hoffman, of the Prudential Insurance Co., notes an increase in the suicide rate of the United States for 1928, when it reached its second highest point in history, being 175 per 100,000. Out of 156 cities, 88 showed an increase. Dr. Hoffman remarks that this 'is a puzzle because of the prevailing prosperity.' It is as though one were to remark that an epidemic of digestive disorders 'is a puzzle because of the surplus of food.'"



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It supplements these statistics with the ideas of Mr. C. M. Joad of Great Britain, who says that suicide in the U.S.A. was once unknown and "is now one of the chief causes of death, especially in New York, where luxury has been most developed. In case our apparent present ambitions are realized, mankind would go to war for relief from boredom, if nothing else."

Some moralists hold that suicide under certain circumstances is not only justifiable but ought to be permitted as well. Yet even these latitudinarians agree that there is no getting away from the fact that suicide, whether justified or otherwise, will always remain a standing monument of self-betrayal, of utter lack of confidence in one's own self, or that the person who commits suicide means to convey by his action to all and sundry that he knows what is hidden in the future—which *prima facie* is an impossibility.

But, we ask, Does there exist no steadying factor in moments of entire loss of self-control? Is this world really so drab and so colourless that there is no bright lining to the dark layers of clouds which hang so low that the awestricken man succumbs to despair? Have Christianity and Islam done nothing in the matter? Why is it that suicide is most prevalent in countries where Christianity is the professed religion, and least prevalent where Islam governs, controls, and regulates the lives of its followers?

Even the English papers, it is significant to recall, remarked on the occasion of the suicide of the late Prime Minister of Mesopotamia last year that a Muslim had been guilty of an action which was extremely rare in Muslim countries. It is certainly not "boredom" or "prevailing prosperity" which is at the bottom of this mischievous aberration in the so-called Christian society. The reason must be sought elsewhere. "Boredom" and "prevailing prosperity" are relative terms, and, moreover, these conditions are by no means unknown among Muslim peoples. Why then has Islam succeeded in eradicating the crime of suicide?

A learned German orientalist, Professor E. Sachau, of Berlin University, once, while discussing the peculiar and

unique achievements of Islam, remarked to the present writer that one of the greatest boons which Islam has given to the world is that it has made every Muslim brave enough to face all the odds of the world. The very sentence in the pages of the Qur-án, "Do not despair of the mercy of Allah," has succeeded in averting many an act of cowardice; and the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, "Whosoever tries to commit suicide is far removed from the grace of Allah," has been potent enough to summon up courage in the breasts of many so that they have taken heart and been able to plod their way through to success.

But these words of Muhammad and the words of the Qur-án would have remained ineffective, had it not been for the perfect conception of God, and the unity of God, which the Holy Qur-án, the religion of Islam, propounds. A firm belief in the unity of God is a perpetual source of limitless strength, whereas an imperfect conception of God, as evidenced in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, must needs be an unfailing source of weak-kneed timidity. A belief that God is One, that He is ar-Rahmān—i.e. the Beneficent God whose love and mercy are manifested in the creation of the blessings of this world which we did not deserve—and ar-Rahīm—i.e. the Merciful God Whose love and mercy manifest themselves when we have done something (a little) to deserve them, and that He is the Lord of all the worlds, cannot but engender in us an immense store of courage and steadfastness. It is this belief in the absolute unity of God that can give a touch of colour and interest to the otherwise drab and opaque atmosphere of life produced by an outlook ever-increasingly materialistic. A religion divorced from the actual routine of life, which Christianity undoubtedly is, affords none of the elevating or illuminating element of a veritable religion which alone can teach that true monotheism which is the bedrock of self-confidence; and so whenever a small misfortune befalls the Christian, he is apt to lose courage and take his life.

To illustrate the measure of the intense self-confidence with which belief in the unity of God has succeeded in inspiring the hearts of the followers of Islam, we will content



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ourselves by referring our readers to the Battle of Omdurman, where the Muslims, armed only with sword and spear, charged the British machine-guns, not in one wave, but in many, and their bodies were found in orderly ranks—and this twelve hundred years after the death of Muhammad!

Could any other nation devoid of belief in the presence of God show such magnificent courage and devotion?

It would be to disregard completely the depths of human nature if one were to brush aside this display of unexampled bravery as being merely an act of foolhardiness. It is most clearly a manifestation of belief in God.

Here it may be suggested that Muslim countries have not as yet met the brunt of the industrialism of the West, and that when that time comes they may fare worse than even Christian Europe. This view is worth considering, but the very fact that Islam has succeeded in intertwining the worldly with the religious is an ample safeguard against the prospect of materialism, which is the outcome of industrialism getting the upper hand. Even Christianity would have been able to control the lives of many if it had not made religion an affair of only one day of the week. A person who prays five times a day to a God who is Merciful, Beneficent, will hardly fall a prey to despair or the pessimism which leads to suicide.

### **The Truth About "Islam, the Poll-tax, or the Sword."**

The learned commentator on the Holy Qur-án, Maulana Muhammad 'Alī, in his book *Tārīkh-i Khilāfat-i Rāshida*, has finally disposed of the ancient fallacy to the effect that the spread of Islam is to be attributed to the slogan, "Islam, the poll-tax, or the sword." The arguments and line of thought which we give below are taken from the above-named work, which, being in Urdu, is not easily accessible to the English reading public.

It is asserted that in the operations carried out by the Muslims in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Persia during the reign of Abū Bakr and Omar the Great, it was the alternatives of the sword, the poll-tax, or Islam which the Muslim envoys invariably offered to the peoples of these countries; in other



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words, that Islam was forced down the throats of its enemies, and that they were required to make their choice from the three alternatives. This slogan is so compactly worded that it is really worth our while to examine it; since, as it is, it is extremely susceptible to misinterpretation.

Historical evidence shows that, in the first place, it was not in this form that the Muslim emissaries delivered their message. Sir William Muir concedes at least that down to the 16 A.H. (642 A.D.), when both Iraq and Syria had been subdued, the idea of offering religion at the point of the sword had never even occurred to the Muslim mind. It must be remembered that many of the Islamic emissaries who had been sent to the Chosroes of Persia and the Roman Emperors are supposed to have been entrusted with the selfsame message; which can only mean that the message was not tantamount to an ultimatum.

Besides, in the battles which the Muslims had to fight they were not always fighting alone, for Christians are seen fighting shoulder to shoulder with them in expeditions against Persia. If the aim of Muslims was to spread their religion by force, how could Christian tribes have sided with them? Moreover, there are cases in which Muslims are reported to have entered into a treaty which neither compelled the non-Muslims to accept Islam nor required them to pay the poll-tax. The only pledge taken from them was that of co-operation in the defence of Arabia. For example, when Antioch, in Syria, had been captured and all the inhabitants submitted to pay the poll-tax, the people of Jurjuma refused to pay it and offered, instead, to fight along with the Muslims against the enemy: and it was on these lines that a treaty was concluded with them. Again, during the period of the conquest of Persia the same treaty clauses were repeated twice: once with the Chieftain of Jurjan and again with the Chieftain of Bāb. In both these cases alliance and not the payment of poll-tax was the basis of negotiations. A fourth instance could be added to the list, namely that of the Banū Taghlib, who, although Christians, paid the poor-rate as if they were Muslims.

These are a few of the examples which have been pre-

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served for us by history, and it is quite possible that there may be many which have not been recorded at all.

The very fact that Christian forces sided with the Muslims is a clear proof that the wars which were waged were wars for the defence of the country. It is truth and nothing but truth that the Muslims never took the offensive. If they ever had to resort to arms, it was for self-protection. It may be said, indeed, with justice that the Muslims detested the very thought of war. To avoid bloodshed they would try all possible means to come to some equitable understanding with the neighbouring peoples who were hard at work seeking to disturb the peace of the Arabian frontiers. For this purpose it was that they sent emissaries who explained to them the nature of Islam and the benefits which it had brought to the Arabs. It was not in the bare, crude form "Islam, the poll-tax, or the sword" that the message was delivered. The emissaries showed how Islam was the surest method for securing peace, seeing that it was the only certain means of turning enemies into brothers. Its acceptance, they believed, just as we now believe, would wipe away all rancour and enmity previously existing between the belligerent nations and the Arabs in exactly the same way as it had done in the case of the Arabs who had been warring against each other for centuries. But, they continued, if they were not ready to settle their differences by this peaceful method, which was the only way wherewith to overcome all misunderstandings, there was yet another course whereby warfare might be avoided, and that was to agree to pay the poll-tax to the Muslims and to acknowledge Arab suzerainty. But should neither of these alternatives be acceptable, there was no other course open but that of crushing the enemy who had caused trouble and intrigue on the Arabian frontiers. After all, this was the line of action pursued by the Allies during the Great War; and if the Arabs followed it, they were doing nothing reprehensible.

The Arabs, indeed, sought to avoid wars at all costs; and Islam was never offered at the point of the sword, but rather as a means of avoiding all future conflicts; for it is the one way which turns enemies into brothers.